**Reddit**

social media forum

**Written by**Alison Eldridge

**Fact-checked by**The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica

Article History

Reddit office, New York City.

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Ticker:

RDDT

Share price:

$187.55 (mkt close, Nov. 17, 2025)

Market cap:

$35.89 bil.

Annual revenue:

$1.90 bil.

Earnings per share (prev. year):

$2.17

Sector:

Communication Services

Industry:

Interactive Media & Services

CEO:

Mr. Steven Ladd Huffman

Headquarters:

San Francisco

News

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China’s Moonshot claims to build models with fewer AI chips than US rivals • Nov. 11, 2025, 2:36 AM ET(South China Morning Post)

Reddit is an online social media forum where users share news stories and other content. Reddit was launched in 2005 by American entrepreneurs Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian; it became a publicly held company in 2024. The company’s headquarters are in San Francisco.

**History**

Huffman and Ohanian met when they were assigned college roommates at the University of Virginia, where Huffman studied computer science and Ohanian studied history and business. During their senior year of college, they came up with an idea for a service that would allow customers to place orders at restaurants via text message before arriving. They pitched it to start-up investor Paul Graham in Boston. This was before the mass proliferation of smartphones and mobile applications, and Graham was skeptical about the idea. However, he liked Huffman and Ohanian and took them on at his start-up accelerator Y Combinator. Graham suggested the pair pursue what would become Reddit, directing them to look at sites such as Delicious and Slashdot, where users aggregated links to other sites.

At first Reddit was meant to be a “front page of the Internet”—and indeed this was its motto for some time. The idea was for users to submit the best articles from major news outlets, journals, and other sites so they would not have to visit each individual publication. Huffman created an algorithm that allowed the most popular content to rise to the top according to both time and popularity. On Reddit a post’s popularity decreases over time unless users continue to “upvote” it—to mark it as important, interesting, or relevant. This is a key way that Reddit differs from other social media and news aggregation sites: It instructs users not to indicate whether they “like” or “dislike” content, but whether it should be promoted or demoted in the context of a discussion. Commenting on posts was added several months after launch, and the ability for users to create subreddits came in 2008.

In 2006 Huffman and Ohanian sold the company to Condé Nast. The pair stepped away from their leadership roles in 2009. After some turmoil within the company, Huffman returned as CEO in 2015. Reddit filed for an initial public offering (IPO) in 2021, but did not officially enter the public market until March 2024.

Snoo takes the podium as Reddit shares begin trading on the New York Stock Exchange.

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**Description and features**

Reddit consists of millions of individual forums called "subreddits," which are mostly user-created and organized by topic of discussion. Subreddits all begin with "r/"—the URL structure that Reddit uses to denote them. Some popular subreddits include "r/askreddit," in which users ask and answer thought-provoking questions; "r/todayilearned," where users submit interesting facts they have recently discovered; and "r/aww," where users post photos and videos of cute things, primarily animals. Topics vary wildly, from the straightforward "r/music" to the oddly specific and esoteric "r/BreadStapledToTrees." Reddit is free to use, but a paid version, Reddit Premium, gives access to an ad-free experience and special features.

Subreddits are managed by volunteer moderators who set and enforce rules for posting. Users, known as "Redditors," can join a forum to participate in posting and commenting on others' posts. They may also "upvote" or "downvote" discussion threads or individual comments; high-ranking posts and comments rise to the top of a forum or discussion. An additional level of approval can be denoted with Reddit awards, which come in various denominations and are available for purchase; a certain number are included with Premium subscriptions. All forums have the same general structure, but moderators can add specific icons, banners, and "flair" that can be used within the forum. Flair are tags that appear after a username—for example, a label that allows a person in a fitness forum to indicate that they are a weightlifter, yogi, cyclist, runner, etc. A user can view recent posts in all of the subreddits that they have joined in their home page feed.

Reddit gives users the ability to create private forums and to message each other directly. It also allows users to create individual avatars, which can be styled with various facial expressions, hairstyles, clothes, and accessories. Some avatar styles are free and others are available only for users of Reddit Premium.

**Influence and controversies**

Reddit has become an important source of breaking news on the Internet. As major events unfold, such as mass shootings or natural disasters, users often collaborate to create a robust running

timeline of events in real time using eyewitness accounts and information from police scanners, news outlets, and other sources.

For nearly a decade, content on Reddit was largely unchecked and unmoderated by the company at large. This led to the creation of many subreddits that centered on or spread hate speech, violence, child pornography, and other transgressive content. There have been numerous controversies over the years about individual subreddits and their influence over events, such as the January 6 U.S. Capitol attack and the 2021 "meme stock" controversy, which began as a subreddit and sparked a sizable disruption in the financial markets.

In the early 2020s, Reddit began doing more to moderate content and has removed several of these communities, although some users still feel not enough is being done.

Alison Eldridge